

58
A *June 20. 6*
DISSERTATION

ON

Saiat Thoria

The SEALS, the TRUMPETS, and the VIALS,

MENTIONED IN THE

BOOK of REVELATION.

WITH

A new ENGRAVING prefixed.

By JAMES PURVES.

PASTOR to a Society of DISSENTERS at
EDINBURGH.

*Things that are revealed belong to us, and to our
Children. Deut. xxix. 29.*

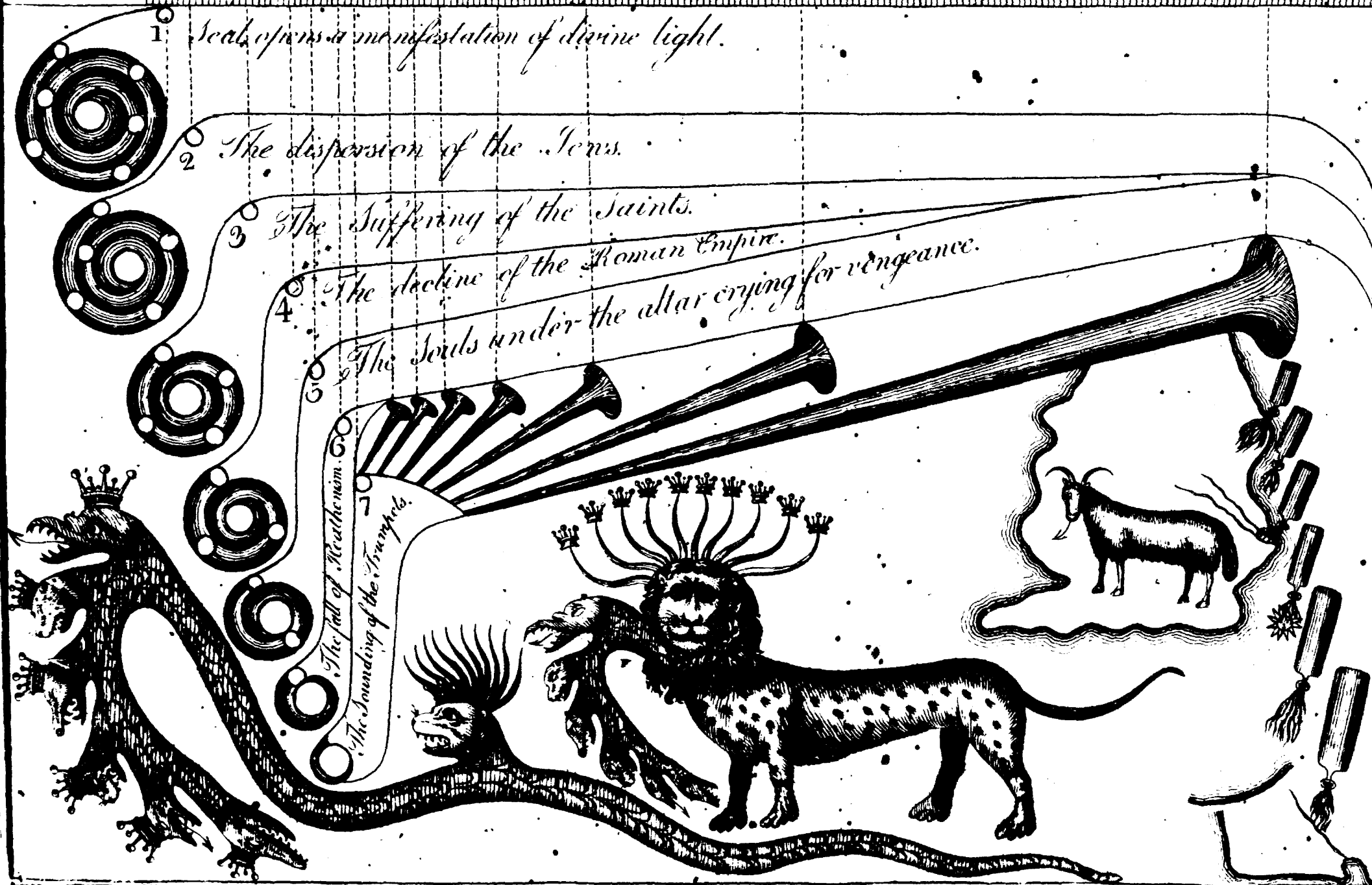
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*1 Scheme of the Seals, the Trumpets, and the Vials, mentioned in the Book of Revelations.
And a representation of the Dragon and the two Beasts described in the XII and XIII Chapters.*

100 200 300 400 500 600 700 800 900 1000 1100 1200 1300 1400 1500 1600 1700 1800 1900 2000



AN EXPLANATION of the SCHEME.

THE scale numbered 100, 200, &c. represents a line of time, from the beginning of the christian *Æra*, to the year 2000; and these numbers express so many years.

The 7 scrolls, represent so many views of the book or scroll, that was sealed with seven seals; and every opening diminishes the scroll, and the number of the seals to be opened. The dotted lines from the opened seals to the scale, point at the times they were opened; and those from the trumpets point at the times they begin to sound. The Seals are here supposed to be opened as follows.

The 1. in the year 33. When the New Testament dispensation, opened a manifestation of divine light; which, it is expected, will spread with increasing brightness in times of the vials, till the earth be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

The 2. in the year 73. When Jerusalem was destroyed and the Jews dispersed. But their return may be expected in the time of the vials.

The 3. about the year 166. When the sufferings of the witnesses, which had been very great about 139, came to be more open, general and severe.

The 4. about the year 238. When the Roman Empire, which had declined fast from 190 had visible signs of its approaching fall.

The 5. about the year 262. When the blood of the saints cried loud for vengeance on their persecutors, who had increased their severity after the year 250. And this cry will get a return in the time of the vials. compare Rev. vi. 10. with Rev. xvi. 5, 6.

The 6. about the year 313. When the heathen power in the Roman Empire, which had declined sometime before, was overthrown by the victory of Constantine.

The 7. about the year 331. When heathenism, which had been falling fast from 313, was abolished by the imperial law.

The seven Trumpets follow the seventh seal, and are supposed to begin to sound as follows.

The 1 in the year 395. After which Alaric with the Huns &c. like a thunder storm over ran the Roman Empire as Rev. viii. 7.

The 2. about the year. 430. After which Atila, &c. consumed the Empire; as Rev. viii. 8.

The 3. about the year 476. When the imperial dignity fell in the western Empire; as Rev. viii. 10.

The 4. about the year 569. When the senate of Rome was abolished, which darkened the Glory of the Empire ; as Rev. viii. 12.

The 5. about the year 711. When the darkness of superstition had greatly encreased, and the Saracen armies were very formidable ; as Rev. ix. 2, 3.

The 6. about the year 1057. When the Turks took Bagdad, and carried their arms against the christians ; as Rev. ix. 15. — 18.

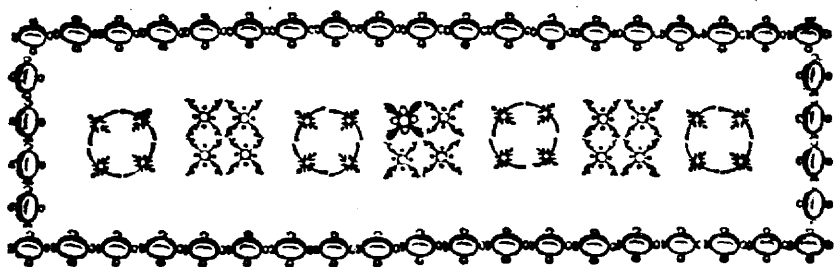
The 7. about the year 1811. When it is possible the events foretold Rev. xi. 15. may begin to take place.

The Vials are here supposed to be poured out after the seventh trumpet begins to sound ; The first Vial is poured upon the Earth Rev. xvi. 11. out of which the last Beast had risen, Rev. xiii. 11. The second Vial is poured upon the sea, Rev. xvi. 3. The third upon the rivers and fountains of waters, Rev. xvi. 4. The fourth upon the sun, Rev. xvi. 8. The fifth upon the seat of the second Beast, Rev. xvi. 10. This Beast had risen out of the sea, Rev. xiii. 1. and the great whore which sits upon this beast, is said to sit on many waters, Rev. xvii. 1. so that the sea, into which this Vial is poured may be considered as the seat of this beast. The sixth is poured upon the great river Euphrates, Rev. xvi. 12. The seventh is poured into the air, Rev. xvi. 17 it is therefore placed high ; and being the last of the last plagues, may refer to the last judgment which is beyond the limits of this worlds duration, and is therefore placed without the lines of this representation. And as the duration of this world is quite unknown to us, a part of the scale is left unnumbered.

The monstrous Beast with seven heads, and seven crowns upon its heads, represents the great red Dragon Rev. xii. 3. The first head, which is that of a crocodile represents the kingdom of Ægypt. The 2d. a serpent, Assyria. The 3d. a lion Babylon. The 4th. a bear, Persia. The 5th. a leopard, Greece. The 6th. a dragon, Rome. The 7th. a leopard with ten horns, the Roman Empire dividing under the last head. Five of these were fallen, at the time of the vision, and the last was not then come. Rev. xvii. 10.

The beast with the crowns upon its horns, represents the beast like a leopard, Rev. xiii. 1. The heads of this are the same with the former ; only six are fallen, & the crowns are transfered from the heads to the horns.

The other represents the beast like a Lamb or Sheep. Rev. xiii. 11,



A DISSERTATION &c.

THAT *the things which are revealed, belong to us and to our children*, can admit of no controversy; and that the things contained in that book, which, *in particular*, is called *the Revelation of Jesus Christ*, belongs to all, and especially to those who profess to be his disciples, can as little be doubted. That all are concerned in the things revealed in this book of Revelation, is most evident; since the dispensations of mercies and judgements, both respecting the world and the church, are therein particularly represented. And it seems to be a criminal neglect in those who profess a love to Christ, to be inattentive to the things which he recommends in a special manner to their attention. Has he employed the ministry of an angel and an apostle to shew these things to us *; and will we take no notice of them? Has he assured us of a blessing, if we read, and hear, and keep the things that are revealed in this book †; and will we be at no pains to learn what these things are? How condescending, how engaging, and how pathetic is his

* Rev. i. 1, † ver. 3.

addresses ? *I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches ; I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright and the morning star.* Rev. xxii. 16.

The importance of these things, is also set forth to us, from what is threatened against those who shall either add to, or diminish from them. *For, he says, I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book ; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city.* Rev. xxii. 18, 19.

This awful threatening ought not only to make every one careful not to corrupt the text, but also not to pervert the sense.

While, therefore, we carefully read, we ought fervently to pray, for the illuminations of the Holy Spirit; to lead us into all truth and dispose our hearts to the love thereof.

In the following dissertation it is not intended to assume a dominion over the faith of any, or to impose the sense there given as infallibly certain ; but to offer such observations, as, by the blessing of God, may be useful, in affording some assistance, to those who wish to be acquainted with the important events, revealed in this too much neglected book.

Our attention to the things revealed in this Book, may be further engaged, from the clear and striking representations that are given therein, of the personal glory, and universal administration of Jesus Christ. He expressly declares, that he is *'The root and offspring of*

David *. *The Alpha and Omega, the first and the last* †. And *The beginning of the creation of God* ‡. These being the declarations of him who is the true and faithful witness, we may believe upon the surest testimony; that he existed before David; that he is the first and the last, in all divine agency in or upon creatures, and that he is the beginning of the creation of God; so that he is *before all things*, being *the first born of every creature* §. He is also declared to be *the prince of the kings of the earth* ||; which clearly proves his supremacy over them, though they and their rulers have combined to rebel against him ¶. His universal administration is also clearly represented, by the similitude of a Lamb that had been slain, taking the sealed book and opening the seals; or dispensing the mercies and judgments, both to the church and the world, which are signified by the similitudes, which the apostle saw at the opening of the several seals; &c. And also by the similitude of one whose name is called the Word of God, going forth upon a white horse, followed by the armies of heaven, having on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords; and overcoming all who oppose his government.

Thus the son of God is set forth as a victorious conqueror, a leader and commander, vested with all power, having the keys of hell and of death; endued with all wisdom and

* Rev. xxii. 16. † Rev. i. 11. ‡ Rev. iii. 14.
 § Col. i. 15, 7. || Rev. i. 5. ¶ Psal. ii. 2. Rev. xvii. 14.

knowledge, so as to search the hearts and try the reins; and acting according to the the most perfect justice and righteousness, both to those who profess to obey him, and those who openly rebel against him; for he says, Rev. 2. 23. *All the churches shall know that I am he that searcheth the reins and hearts, and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.* And Rev. 19. 11. *In righteousness he doth judge and make war.*

As some of the events represented in this Book of Revelation, must have begun at the beginning of the New Testament dispensation, and as they all follow one another in a constant chain of succession, many of the events which were then predictions, are now historical facts. Should we therefore be so happy as to discover the just agreement between the similitudes, and the facts that have taken place, down to our own time, we might thereby be led to see what part of the prophecy we are under, and also to more just apprehensions of the signification of the similitudes that respect events yet to come.

How far what is here offered, may contribute to these ends, must be left to the judgment of those who apply themselves to the study of these things; and to time, the best interpreter of prophecy.

The opening of the Seals, appear to signify the manifestation of certain events, respecting the church and the world, which were to be brought about by the administration of Christ under the New Testament dispensation; for they are opened by the Lamb that had been slain.

The FIRST SEAL.

The opening of the first Seal, and what appeared thereupon, is described Rev. vi. 1, 2.

*And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the Seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures * saying, as the voice of thunder; come and see. And I looked, and behold a white horse, and he that sat upon him had a bow, and a crown was given unto him; and he went forth conquering, and that he might conquer.*

The *White Horse* here appears to be an emblem of a *merciful dispensation*; and he who sat on this Horse seems to be JESUS CHRIST, who conducted that light and salvation which went forth by the preaching of the Apostles after they were filled with the Holy Spirit at the day of Pentecost. The bow, an emblem of strength, may signify that power by which he is able to subdue all things to himself; as Philp. iii. 21. and the crown that was given to him, may signify the gift of all regal power, and authority to judge and execute judgment; as Matth. xxviii. 18. John. v. 22, 27. His *going forth conquering*, may signify the success of the gospel in the apostolic age; and the words, *that he might conquer*, may intimate, that the great conquests then made by the extraordinary manifestation of divine power, in that dispensation, was for the convincing of the world, and to bring

* I have rendered the word *ζῶντες living creatures*, as it is Ezek. i. 5, 13, 14. &c. and as it should be rendered; I think, where ever it occurs. It is different from the word *ἄγγελοι* rendered *beasts* Rev. vi. 8. which in the singular is rendered *beast* Rev. xiii. 1, 11. and xvii. 3. &c. When in any other instance I intentionally vary from the common reading it is because I think it not so literal as that which I set down.

all nations to the obedience of faith; agreeable to the prayer of our Lord, John xvii. 21, 23. the design of his sending the holy spirit, John. xvi. 8. and the intent of the gospel. Rom. i. 5. and xvi. 26.

It may be observed, however, that though the apostle saw a crown given to him that sat on the horse, he does not say that he saw it on his head; whereas when he had a vision of Christ again sitting on a White Horse, after the resurrection of the witnesses, he says, *on his head were many crowns*. Rev. xix. 12. These different appearances do very plainly indicate; that though all kingly dignity was given to Christ by the Father, yet his subjects did not then put it upon his head, by acknowledging him as head over all things to the church, and so forming themselves into a Theocracy, or under a divine government, for the management of their civil as well as religious concerns; but that after a train of sufferings, and the rising of the sun of righteousness with healing in his wings, they will have such views of the kingly dignity, power, and authority of Christ, through all the variety and vast extent of created beings, that they will put as it were many crowns upon his head, by acknowledging his universal supremacy, in all his dominions every where.

That there was a defect in the church, with respect to the management of their civil differences, and that they were faulty for going to the heathen rulers to get these differences settled is most evident, from 1 Cor. vi. 1—6. And as they were defective in not asserting the civil supremacy of Christ as they should have done; so they soon suffered him to be robbed of the ecclesiastical supremacy also; for after the Emperor Constantine declared in favour of Christianity, he

assumed a headship (over the church, which has continued to be exercised either by kings or popes, over all established churches ever since.

But notwithstanding this and other defects, and the working of the mystery of iniquity, even in the apostolic age ; yet the light of divine truth through the mercy of God spread to an amazing extent in a very short time ; though its progress was opposed by most cruel persecutions. And though its brightness has been obscured, and its extension straitened, by the apostacy ; its light has never been extinguished, but still shines, and will at length spread with encreasing brightness through all the earth. Isa. xi. 9.

This seal appears therefore to have been opened about the year 33. * and its effects will run through all time, into eternity.

The SECOND SEAL. Rev vi. 3, 4.

And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature, say, come and see. And there went out another horse that was red, and to him that sat thereon, it was given or permitted, to take peace from the earth, that they might kill one another, and a great sword was given unto him.

The horse that goes forth at the opening of

* The Apostle's seeing this vision about 63 years after, can be no proof that the opening of this seal did not respect the opening of the New Testament dispensation, any more than the prophet Daniel seeing four great beasts arise, long after the rise of the Babylonian Empire, can be a proof that none of these Beasts represented that Empire. The Apostle John saw the Lamb take the book, as well as open the seals ; it may therefore as well be said that Christ did not begin his administration till after John saw this vision, as that he opened none of the seals till after that time.

this seal, being called *another*, may indicate that a dispensation of *another* kind than the former was thereby signified ; and that the events were effected by *another* influence. The former was a manifestation of love mercy and peace, in the hearts and actions of the followers of the Lamb, under the influence of the spirit of God ; but this a manifestation of hatred, cruelty, and war, in the followers of the beast, under the influence of the spirit of the world. The first horse was white, a proper emblem of mercy and peace ; the second red, a striking emblem of cruelty and war.

He who sat on the white horse is the prince of peace, the great reconciler of all things ; but he who sits on the red horse takes peace from the earth, that they might kill one another. And the great sword that was given to him that sat on the red horse, may signify the great slaughter, that was made by the agency of what is represented thereby.

The similitudes which were seen by the apostle when the second Seal was opened, appear therefore to represent the war that took place between the Jews and the Romans, between the years 66. and 139. Both Jews and Gentiles had been favoured with a dispensation of the gospel of peace, the word of reconciliation had been ministered unto both ; but instead of submitting thereto, both they and their rulers had not only concurred in crucifying the Lord of glory, but had also embrued their hands in the blood of the ambassadors of peace, whom he sent to declare to them the glad tidings of salvation. Therefore, as those who will not receive the truth in love that they may be saved, are suffered in the righteous judgment of God to believe a lie to their

own destruction ; so, when they did not receive the message of peace, they were also left to destroy one another with wars and fightings. And from whence come these ? Not from God, but the lusts that war in the hearts of men. Jam. iv. 1.

This seal appears to have been opened about the year 73 when Jerusalem was destroyed ; and the effect of this seal, the dispersion of the Jews, will likely continue till the time of the pouring out of the sixth vial.

The THIRD SEAL. Rev. vi. 5. 6.

And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature, say, come and see. And I looked and behold a black horse, and he that sat upon him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the living creatures, saying, a measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny, and hurt not thou the wine and the oil.

The Black horse that goes forth at the opening of this seal, is a fit emblem of a dark dispensation, and the balances may well represent, the persecutions by which the faith and patience of the saints were put to a most open trial ; and it may also represent the word of God, the balance of the sanctuary in which all the actions of men will be weighed. These similitudes appears, therefore, to represent the afflicting, and trying persecutions which the faithful suffered between the year 139 and 190. Not that their sufferings began and ended within this period ; but that in this period they came to be more open, general and severe, and their doctrine and practice came to a more open trial, by the controversies that took place between Christian and heathen writers.

Within this period also, between 160 and 180 in the reign of Aurelius, some very dark and disastrous events befel the Roman Empire.

‘ A raging pestilence spreading terror and desolation through all parts of the western world ; earthquakes, and inundations, such as had never before happened ; the products of the earth throughout all Italy destroyed by locusts ; all the barbarous nations surrounding the Empire, the Germans the Sarmatians, the Quadi, the Marcomanni, taking advantage of its various calamities, and making their irruptions even into Italy itself. The priests doing all they could to put a stop to the miseries of the state, by attempting to appease the gods ; vowing and offering numberless sacrifices ;——To crown the whole, these enthusiasts, —— ascribing the distresses of the state to the impieties of the christians alone ; so that a violent persecution was seen raging in all parts of the Empire : in which Justin Martyr, and St. Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, and an infinite number of others suffered *.’ About the same time apologies had been written in favour of the christian religion and the arguments of the heathen philosophers against it, refuted ; for among others, Justinus, a man in learning and philosophy excellent ; and a great defender of the Christian religion, who first exhibited unto the emperor, and to the senate a book or apology in defence of the christians, and afterwards himself died a Martyr, — thro’ the malicious means and crafty circumvention of Crescens. This Crescens was a philosopher, whom, because Justinus had reproved in

‘ open audience, and had born away the victory of the truth which he defended; he therefore, as much as in him lay, did work and procure unto him this crown of martyrdom †.’

Melito Bishop of Sardius, in an apology to the emperor *Marcus Aurelius Verus*, represents the sufferings of the faithful to be far greater than they had been before; for he says, ‘ The godly people greived by reason of edicts which were published throughout all Asia, and never before practised, and now suffer persecution : For impudent sycophants, and greedy gapers after other mens goods, having gotten occasion through these proclamations, openly rob and spoil, day and night, such as commit no trespass at all. ’ *Euseb. Hist. lib. 4. Ch. 25.*

The same historian, *Proem to lib. 5.* says ‘ And then was the seventeenth year of *Antonius Verus* the emperor, in which time persecution increasing against us in all parts of the world. ’

That the christians about this time suffered new and extraordinary tortures, appears also from a letter from the French sufferers to their brethren in Asia; where among other things they say, ‘ And when as now, there remained no punishment unpractised, at length they applied unto the tenderest parts, — plates of brass glowing hot, — and above all they patiently suffered the iron chair, wherein their bodies boiled as in a frying pan. ’ — *Euseb. Hist. lib. 5. Ch. 1.*

Such severe and general sufferings, was a dark dispensation, and might well be represented by a black horse; and such extraordinary trials, might be fitly represented by a balance, or pair of bal-

ances, by which the faith and love of the saints was seen to be real and substantial.

A voice being heard among the *living creatures*, may also indicate that this seal relates chiefly to the Church; these being the same with the *Che-rubims* or *Seraphims*, which were alway placed in the sanctuary, the emblem of the church, where God dwells and manifests his presence. And this voice anouncing, a measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; may denote, that sufficient provision was made for the spiritual nourishment and support of the faithful in the these trying times. The measure and value being also specified, may likewise denote, the exact proportion in which Christ administers supplies to his people, according to the labour he requires them to perform. And a particular charge being given not to hurt the wine and the oil, may indicate that the consolations of divine grace, and the the influences of the holy spirit, by which the soul is made to rejoice and shine in holiness, was not to be hurt, but rather promoted by these trials.

This seal may be considered as being fully opened, about 166. and the effects of it, the trials of the faithful, increased till near the fall of the heathen power in the Roman Empire, since which time they have much diminished, but will not likely be quite ended till the time of the vials.

The FOURTH SEAL. Rev. vi. 7, 8.

And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature, saying, Come and see, And I looked, and behold a pale horse, and his name that sat on him was death, and hell follow.

ed with him; and power was given to them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

The pale or yellow horse is a fit emblem of a dispensation, portending the desolation, of what it was to affect; and death sitting thereon, may denote, that thereby an end would be put to the existence of the then political state of the Roman Empire. And this is expressly said to be by the four great judgments, which are also mentioned Ezek. xiv. 21.

The fourth of the Earth, upon which these agents were to act, appears to be a distinguishing character of the Roman empire, as described in the prophecy of Daniel, where it is called the *fourth Kingdom upon the earth*, Dan. vii. 23.

The events that agree with the opening of this seal appears to have happened between 190 and 260. when the decline of the Empire became manifest, by the open violation of its laws and customs, intestine divisions, and foreign invasions.

The emperor Pertinax being murdered about the year 193, 'The soldiers, made proclamation that they would sell the empire to whoever would purchase it at the highest price,—Dedius who produced immense sums of ready money prevailed, *' Dedius——was killed in the 5th month by the orders of his successor Severus.—he defeated his competitors Neger and Albinus; degraded the senate; and after an able but despotical reign of 18 years, died at York A. D. 211. Caracalla, his son, murdered his brother Geta, and exercised the most horrid cruelties. †'

* G. Hist. p. 280.

† Sum. of Geo. & Hist.

‘ During the reign of this execrable tyrant, which continued six years, the empire was every day declining; the soldiers were entire masters of every election; and as there were various armies in different parts, so there were as many interests all opposite to each other †.’ And about A. D. 235. ‘ The upper Germans and other northern nations, began to pour down immense swarms of people, upon the more southern parts of the empire. They passed the Rhine and the Danube with fury, that all Italy was thrown into the most extreme consternation ‥.’ About A. D. 251. ‘ There was a dreadful plague that lasted for fifteen years together; which — went through most of the provinces of the Roman Empire;—And there was a famine also;—After which it was frequent for the wild beasts to ravage and to break into the very cities *.’ These events seem very plainly and fully to agree with the similitudes that were seen at the opening of this seal.

This fourth seal may therefore be considered as fully opened about the year 238; and the effect thereof, the *total fall* of the Roman Empire, appears to have been fully accomplished under the fourth trumpet, when the senate was abolished, which was one of the first parts of the Roman constitution and the last that was destroyed; so that like the heart in the human frame, it lived longest though it had often been subject to palpitations.

The FIFTH SEAL. Rev. vi. 9. & 11.

And when he had opened the fifth seal I saw under

† Goldsmith's Rom. Hist. p. 235. ‥ ibid, p. 287.

* Annot. on the Rev. p. 96.

the altar, the souls of them that were slain, for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long O Lord, Holy and true wilt thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth. And white robes were given to each of them, and it was said to them that they should rest yet a little season until it should be fulfilled, and their fellow servants, and their brethren should be killed even as they.

The similitudes that appear at the opening of this seal, are an altar, and under it the souls of the martyrs. The altar here seems to signify, what was typified by the altar of burnt offerings, at the bottom of which the blood of the sacrifices was to be poured, and on which the sacred fire was always to burn; it may therefore signify Jesus Christ through whom believers present themselves living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, having all their defilements purged away, and their natures changed by the influence of the *Holy Spirit*, signified by the *fire*, upon the altar. The souls of the witnesses who were slain, being under the *altar*, may signify the rest and safety they enjoy under the protection of *Christ*, who will exalt them to a glorious reign with himself; as it is said, 2 Tim. ii. 12. *If we suffer, we shall also reign with him.* Their crying with a loud voice may signify that their number was great and their prayer fervent, or that their blood cried loud for vengeance. And their being commanded to rest yet a little season, till their brethren should be killed even as they, seems to denote, that there were others to be killed as they had been, before the vengeance of God should take place upon their persecutors.

From these circumstances it would seem, that

the opening of this seal was after many had been slain by heathen powers, and before the last of these persecutions was ended; consequently between the years 250. & 303. After the year 250. the persecution of the faithful seems still to have increased, for in the reign of Decius, *Dionysius* Bishop of Alexandria, says, ‘ There was no way left for us to pass, no not the common highway, nor any passage either by day or by night; they cried out all, and exclaimed every where, there was no other choice but either to utter blasphemy, or be drawn and burnt at the stake. — And that most dreadful saying of our saviour prognosticated long ago now taketh place, that if it were possible the very elect themselves should be offended. — some after they had stoutly endured torments, in the end denied Christ; but others that were blessed and valiant, as pillars or bulwarks of the Lord, being strengthened by him, and stout in protesting their faith, having gotten unto themselves worthy constancy and courage sufficient, became renowned martyrs in the kingdom of heaven. *’

Again he says, ‘ What shall I say of the multitude of them which wander in the desert and waste mountains, consumed with famine and hunger, and cold, and diseases, spoiled by thieves, and devoured of beasts. †’

That these severe persecutions were suffered to come upon the church, because the laws and institution of the Gospel had not been rightly observed, was confessed by Cyprian, who suffered martyrdom in the reign of *Valerianus* between 256 & 263 For he says, ‘ We must understand

‘and confess, that this turbulent oppression and
‘calamity, which hath wasted for the most part
‘all our whole company, and doth daily con-
‘sume it, riseth chiefly of our own wickedness
‘and sins, while we walk not in the way of the
‘Lord,—The Lord observed the will of his
‘Father in all points, but we observe not the
‘will of the Lord, having all our mind and stu-
‘dy set upon lucre and possessions, given to
‘pride, full of emulation and dissention, void of
‘simplicity and faithful dealing,—We suffer
‘for our sins and deserts, as by the Lords cen-
‘sure we have been forwarned, saying, ‘*If they*
‘*shall forsake my law, and will not walk in my judg-*
‘*ments; if they shall prophane my institutions, and*
‘*will not observe my precepts, I will visit their ini-*
‘*quities with the rod, and their transgressions with*
‘*scourges* †.

‘As touching now the crimes and accusations
‘in this persecution laid to the charge of the
‘Christians, this was the principal. First because
‘they refused to do worship to their idols and to
‘the emperors; then for that they professed the
‘name of Christ: besides, all the calamities and
‘evils that that happened in the world, as wars,
‘famine, and pestilence, were imputed only to
‘Christians ‖.

When *Polycarpus* was advised by some of the
magistrates to say Lord Cæsar, he answered, ‘I
‘will not condescend to your counsel. †’ When
Basilides a soldier, after he became a christian,
was required to swear on some occasion, ‘he af-
‘firm’d plainly that it was not lawful for him to
‘swear, for he was a christian, §’—And *Ammo-*

† Hist of the Ten persecutions, p. 169: ‖ ib. 172

† Euseb. lib. 4. ch. 15.

§ ib. lib. 6. ch. 4.

narion, ‘a holy virgin,’ was grievously tormented by the judge, ‘for that she foretold him she would obey him in nothing †.

From the conduct of these notable persons, it would seem, that the early christians, at least some of them, were not very obedient to the commands of the rulers then in being.

After these severe persecutions under *Decius* and *Valerian* ended, about the year 262. the church is said to have enjoyed quietness, for a long time; so that counting from the latter end of *Valerian*, unto the 19 year of *Dioclesian*, the peace of the church,—seemeth to be above 40 years*.

‘But as commonly the nature of all men, being of itself unruly and untoward, always seeketh and desireth prosperity, and yet can never well use prosperity, always would have peace and yet having peace, always abuseth the same; so here likewise it happened with these men, which through this so great liberty and prosperity of life, began to degenerate and languish unto idleness and delicacy, and one to work spite and contumely against another, striving and contending amongst themselves,—bishops against bishops, and people against people, moving hatred and sedition one against another;—By reason whereof the judgment of God, after his wonted manner, began by little and little,—falling first upon our brethren which were abroad in warfare: But when that touched the other nothing or very little, neither did they seek to appease God’s wrath, and call for his mercy; but wickedly thinking with ourselves, that God neither regarded nor would visit our transgressions, we

† Euseb. lib, 6. ch. 40

* Hist. of the Ten Persecutions, p. 207.

‘ heaped our iniquities daily more and more upon
 ‘ one another; and they which seemed to be our
 ‘ pastors, refusing the rule of piety, were inflamed
 ‘ with mutual contentions one against another.
 ‘ By reason whereof (the wrath of God being kind-
 ‘ led against his church) ensued the tenth and
 ‘ last persecution against the Christians, so horri-
 ‘ ble and grievous, that it maketh the pen almost
 ‘ to tremble to write upon it; so tedious, that ne-
 ‘ ver was any persecution before or since compar-
 ‘ able to it for the time it continued, lasting the
 ‘ space of ten years together. *’

As it appears from the text that the opening of this fifth seal was between the last, and the forgoing persecutions; so it seems to furnish us with another mark for fixing it between 250 and 303. For not only had many been killed, and others were still to be killed; when this seal was opened; but the living creatures are also represented as ceasing to utter their voice, as formerly. Which seems well to agree, with the general defection that took place between these severe persecutions that have been taken notice of.

This seal may, therefore, be considered as being fully opened about the year 262. And the cry of their blood, together with the blood of all the saints that have been slain since, may be considered as crying, and will continue to cry till God shall fully avenge his own elect who cry unto him day and night, and reward the souls of the martyrs with the blessedness of the last resurrection. And these events are not likely to be accomplished till the pouring out of the sixth vial.

* Hist. of Persecutions, p. 208. See also Euseb. l. 8 c. 1.

The SIXTH SEAL. Rev. vi. 12—17.

And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and lo, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood. And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs when she is shaken of a mighty wind: And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together, and every mountain and Island were moved out of their places: And the kings of the earth, and the great men and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men and every bond man, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens, and among the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand.

The similitudes that appear at the opening of this seal, are generally supposed to be borrowed from the scenes that will appear at the general judgment, and are figurative of the fall of heathenism in the Roman Empire. This being the subject of the vision, the darkening or dissolving of what gave vigour to the system, and the falling of its several supports; is represented by the darkening of the sun, the obscuring of the moon, and the falling of the stars. And the diminutive state to which the whole system of heathenism was brought in the empire, seems to be represented by a scroll rolled together.

The mountains and islands being moved out of their places, may signify the alterations that took place in the several governments and provinces in the empire; which were not totally abolished,

as they will be Chap. xvi. 20. The kings and great men &c. hiding themselves, may signify the obscurity to which the competitors for empire, all the mighty men, and all who persecuted the christians, were driven to, when those who had been persecuted, ruled over their oppressors.

All these things are represented as following a great earthquake; and great earthquakes are usual figures for great revolutions.

This seal may be considered as being opened between the year 303 and 337. It appears to have been fully opened about the year 313. when Constantine having obtained a complete victory over Maxentius declared in favour of christianity; and the effect of this seal appears to have been fully accomplished, when the heathen temples were abolished, and heathen power put down in the Empire, about the year 331.

THE SEVENTH SEAL. Rev. viii. 1, 2.

And when he had opened the Seventh Seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. And I saw the seven angels which stood before God, and to them were given seven trumpets.

The opening of this seal is noted, by a silence in heaven, for a short space of time; and this silence seems to signify the silence that was in the church, in respect of testimony, against the opposers of the authority of Christ, for some time after the fall of heathen power in the empire. And as this power was put down before the death of Constantine, this seal may be considered as being fully opened before his death, which happened in the year 337.

The opening of this seal introduces a train of events, some of which run into futurity quite

beyond our view ; but the first that are mentioned are the silence in heaven, and the seven angels with seven trumpets.

With respect to the silence in heaven, it has been observed, that it seems to signify the silence that continued in the church, after the fall of the heathen power ; so that no testimony was given against the encroachments that were made on the prerogatives of Christ, and the corruptions that were introduced into the doctrine and ordinances of the gospel, till these had gone on for a considerable time, and increased to a great magnitude.

That the Christian emperors encroached on the prerogatives of Christ, is evident from the power that Constantine and his successors assumed over the church ; in calling ecclesiastical courts, superintending their proceedings, and appointing and deposing bishops at their pleasure. And this they likely did, from an opinion that the pontifical authority which was invested in the emperors, still belonged to them, and that professing christianity ; they had a right to exercise all that authority over the christian religion, which they exercised over the heathen religion when that was their profession.

The titles, the ensigns, the prerogatives of SOVEREIGN PONTIFF, which had been instituted by Numa, & assumed by Augustus, were accepted without hesitation by seven christian Emperors *.

The unscriptural titles, honour, and dominion also, that was given the bishops ; and the superstitious regard that was paid to *Relics* ; were all congenial to the ideas of men who exerci-

* Gibon's Hist. Vol. 2. P. 308.

cised a despotic power over the rest of mankind, and saw a similar, or higher veneration, paid to the images of their predecessors. For ‘ how easy was it for the Christian Emperors in those days to swallow down with sweetness all that devotion towards the martyrs and their reliques, who did not disgust, but assume such suspected titles as these to themselves, *ἡμετέρα θεότης* *Our Godhead, Our Divinity*, wills thus and thus,; which phrases occur in the rescripts of Theodosius M. and Justinian; and is by some noted as a kind of political idolatry.’ *

As these christian Emperors, besides these unwarrantable titles, assumed the prerogatives of Christ, in claiming and exercising a despotic power over all causes, and regulating all the outward forms of worship; so they assumed a dominion over the faith of their subjects, For some of the edicts of Theodosius runs thus, ‘ It is our pleasure that all the nations which are governed by our clemency & moderation, should steadfastly adhere to the religion which was taught by St. Peter to the Romans; which faithfull tradition has preserved, and which is now professed by the pontiff of Damascus, and by Peter bishop of Alexandria, a man of apostolical holiness. According to the discipline of the apostles, & doctrine of the gospel, let us believe the sole diety of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost; under equal majesty, and trinity. We authorize the followers of this doctrine to assume the title of Catholic christians, and as we judge that all others are extravagant mad men, we brand them with the infamous name of heretics; and

* Dr. Henry More's *Paralipomena Prophetica*. p. 244.

‘ declare that their conventicles shall no longer
 ‘ usurp the respectable appellation of churches.
 ‘ Besides the condemnation of divine justice, they
 ‘ must expect to suffer the severe penalties which
 ‘ our authority guided by heavenly wisdom,
 ‘ shall think proper to inflict upon them. * ’

As the Emperors went beyond the bounds of civil rulers, on the one hand; so the Bishops went beyond the bounds of ecclesiastical rulers on the other; for, ‘ Some bishops were magistrates, ‘ some senators and counsellors, some presidents ‘ and lieutenants of provinces ; ’ in the reign of Constantius, about the year 363 — Cyrilus bishop of Alexandria about 418. beside the oversight of his clergy and ecclesiastical matters, took also the government of temporal affairs — About 430. Celestinus bishop of Rome passing the bounds of his priestly order, presumed now to challenge to himself secular power and authority †. And, ‘ It ‘ cannot be denied indeed, that the title of uni- ‘ versal bishop, or patriarch, was given to the bish- ‘ op of Rome in the year 451. in the council of ‘ Chalcedon. ‡ ’ From all which it appears, that in the fourth and fifth centuries, there were very open encroachments made on the prerogatives of Christ, and gross defections from the purity and simplicity of the doctrine and ordinances of the gospel ; yet no public testimony appears to have been given against these for a considerable time, their attention being wholly engaged in theological disputes, which were likely pursued in order to get into places of honour and profit in

* Gibon's Hist. Vol. 3 P. 11.

† Socrates Scholasticus Hist. lib. 2. ch. 22. lib. 7. ch. 7.

‡ Bell's Sermons against popery. p. 41.

the church, as political disputes frequently are to get places of that kind in the state.

It may be difficult to determine the exact time of the half hours silence, since the word *opa hour* is used in this book of Revelation, and other writings of this apostle, to denote certain seasons, or periods of time, of different duration; and this silence is not said to be exactly a half of this season, what ever it may be, but about, or like, a half hour, or *season*: as the word is rendered, John 5. 35. and 1 John 3 18. The half hours silence seems therefore to denote, a silence in the church as before observed, for about the half of some season or time noted in this prophecy. I shall only mention two. First, the season or time between the death of Constantine—A. D. 337

and the abolishing of the senate — 569

Which is ————— 232

The half of which is ————— 116

To which add ————— 313

They make ————— 429

When it is probable the prophecy of the witnesses in sackcloth began.

Second, the season or time between the popes acquiring a civil supremacy ————— 756

and the kings of England the Ecclesiastic 1534

is ————— 778

The half of which is , ————— 389

To which add ————— 313

They make ————— 702

When it is likely the voice of the witnesses began to sound high against apostacy, so as to answer the description of the angel flying in the midst of heaven, denouncing wars to the inhabitants of the earth, under the fourth trumpet.

Various opinions have been formed concerning the trumpets, but that of Newton, &c. who

consider them as representing the outward calamities which in the righteous judgment of God were inflicted, or suffered to come, upon the Roman Empire, and the christian world in general, because of their idolatry and impiety ; seems most agreeable to the similitudes, and the express design of these plagues ; which was to bring the apostate christians to repentance. Rev. ix. 20, 21.

THE SOUNDING of the FIRST TRUMPET.

Rev. viii. 7.

And the first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth, and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

Bishop Newton, says, by this trumpet were principally intended, the irruptions and depredations of the Goths under Alaric, who began his incursions, 395. ravaged Greece, wasted Italy, and besieged Rome ; and though bought off at an exorbitant price, besieged it again, took and plundered it, and set fire to it in several parts, A. D. 410. Philostrogius who lived in, and wrote of these times, saith, that the sword of Barbarians destroyed the greatest multitude of men ; and, among other calamities, dry heats, with flashes of flame, and whirl winds of fire, occasioned various and intolerable terrors ; yea, and hail greater than could be held in a mans hand, fell down in several places, Weighing as much as eight pounds, Jerom also saith of some of these barbarians, that they came on unexpectedly every where ; and marching quicker than report, spared not religion, nor dignities, nor age, nor had compassion on crying infants ; those were compelled to die, who had scarce

begun to live. So truly did they destroy the trees and the green grass together.

This trumpet might begin to sound, immediately after the death of Theodosius, A. D. 395. in the reign of Arcadius and Honorius, his sons who being weak princes, new tribes of barbarians succeeding one another, rushed in upon the empire like a torrent, and swept every thing before them *.

The SECOND TRUMPET, Rev. viii. 8.

And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea, and the third part of the sea became blood.

A mountain in Scripture is sometimes used as an emblem of a kingdom; thus the babylonian empire was said to become a burnt mountain, when it was to be destroyed; and here the Roman empire, appears to be fitly represented by a mountain burning with fire cast into the sea, when it was consuming in the midst of the people; the dominions of the empire being turned into a scene of blood, by the devastation and slaughter, which they suffered from the nations who invaded them.

It is said that after Alaric and the Goths, Attila and the Huns, wasted the provinces of the empire both in the east and west, with great cruelty, about the year 447. That slaying the inhabitants, and laying the buildings in ashes, he filled all places between the Alps and the Appenines with flight, depopulation, slaughter, & burning. And Gesneric king of the Vandals took Rome, and pillaged it for eleven days, A. D. 455.

This second trumpet might therefore begin to

found about the year 430. when these calamities which consumed the empire began to be most visibly seen, and sensibly felt.

The THIRD TRUMPET, Rev. viii. 10.

And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp ; and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters,

This fallen star may very fitly represent a fallen dignity in the system of the empire, and being a great star, may signify a great dignity, namely, the imperial dignity, which fell in the western division of the empire, upon the abdication of Augustulus ; and this star falling like a burning lamp, is in this respect similar to the fall of the empire like a burning mountain. Its falling upon the rivers, and fountains of waters, may signify the effect that the fall of the imperial power had on all the administrations, and offices, which depended thereon, which thereby became dangerous to those who occupied them.

The similitudes mentioned at the sounding of this trumpet, seem, therefore, to agree with great exactness, to what happened upon the expiring of the imperial power in the west : And this trumpet might begin to sound about A. D. 476. when Odoacer, king of the Heruli, coming to Rome, stript Augustulus of the imperial robes, put an end to the western empire, and caused himself to be proclaimed king of Italy. But though a great star was thus fallen in the imperial system ; yet the sun and moon still subsisted ; for Rome was still allowed to have her senate, and consuls, and other subordinate officers as before ; these were extinguished at what took place at the sounding of the next trumpet.

The FOURTH TRUMPET. Rev. viii. 12.

And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so that the third part of them was darkened, and the third part of them shone not, by day and by night likewise.

The sun, the moon, and the stars which were darkened upon the sounding of this trumpet, may signify, the senate, the consuls, and subordinate officers, which were suffered to continue sometime after the foresaid dignity fell, for Theodoric who conquered and slew Odoacer, and established the kingdom of the Ostrogoths in Italy, changed none of the Roman institutes; he retained the senate, consuls, and all the ancient magistrates, and committed these offices only to Romans. But when Longinus was sent in the year 560, by the emperor Justin II. to govern Italy with absolute authority, ‘ he changed the
‘ whole form of government, abolished the senate
‘ and consuls, and all the former magistrates in
‘ Rome and Italy.’ This fourth trumpet may therefore be said to have sounded about the year 569; when the senate, which had been like the sun in the system of the Roman government, was abolished, upon which all the other offices which derived their authority and dignity from its influence, behoved of course to be obscured; like the light of the moon and planets, when the light of the sun is withdrawn.

The sounding of the fourth trumpet is also marked, by an angel flying in the midst of heaven, denouncing woes to the inhabitants of the earth; which seems to end the half hours silence, mentioned verse first.

The FIFTH TRUMPET. Rev. ix. 1.

And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fallen from heaven, and to him was given the key of the well of the abyss.

This fallen star seems to be different from that mentioned Chap. viii. 10. for that seems to be in a consuming state like the mountain burning with fire; but the key given to this signifies the acquisition of power. And the falling of that star, affected the third of the rivers &c. but the effects of this seem to be more universal, not being confined to a third of any thing like the former.

This star seems therefore to be one of the stars of heaven which had been cast down to the earth by the tail of the dragon; or one of the Christian bishops, who had been subverted from the simplicity of the gospel, by the earthly honours and emoluments, which were conferred on them by the Christian Emperors. And the star that got the key appears plainly to be the bishop of Rome; who acquired an universal supremacy. A key is generally allowed to be an emblem of power or authority, and many waters in this prophecy signifies, multitudes of people and nations, Chap. xvii. 15. The abyss or great deep may therefore signify the great multitude of people and nations who united in corrupting, and yet professing christianity; and the well or spring of the abyss, may signify the will or choice from whence their several actions did spring. The key of the well of the abyss which was given to this fallen star, and his opening the well of the abyss with the key; doth therefore most fitly represent the supremacy that was given to the apostate bishop of Rome, or annexed to that bishoprick, by which the pope has influenced the will

and determinations of the people of all ranks and conditions. This supremacy was gradually acquired, and various dates have been assigned to it, from near the beginning of the 5th till after the middle of the 8th Century. The most noted æras are 606. when Phocas the emperor acknowledged the supremacy of pope Boniface III; and 756. when the Pope is said to have got the *civil supremacy*.

But though the supremacy of the pope, might be more implicitly submitted to, at or after this time as darkness increased; it does not appear to be any thing different in kind from what it was before; for about the year 708 pope Gregory III. excommunicated the emperor Leo, for his opposition to the worship of images; and excommunications, bulls, and anathemas, are the weapons that have been used since by the popes, against such civil potentates, as at any time have been refractory; Some of which have been more successful since than at that time; for the emperor Leo was so far from being submissive, that he banished the Patriarch of Constantinople for supporting the opinion of the pope.

After this fallen star had received the key it is said, verse 2. *And he opened the well of the abyss, and there arose a smoke out of the well, as the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the well.*

The gross corruption, ignorance, and superstition, that arose from the influence of the pope's supremacy over the minds of the people, are fitly represented by the smoke of a great furnace. And as these increased, the pope's ascendancy over the minds of the people became more strong; so that they became the willing instruments of cruelty and persecution, against all that they de-

creed to be heretics; and an excommunicated king or emperor, was in danger of being deserted of all his subjects, and denied attendance by his domestics. For instances of papal usurpation and haughtiness, see Dr. Newton on prophecy, Vol. 2. P. 337. &c.

Such a state of ignorance, superstition, and prophanity, as ensued upon the exercise of the popish supremacy, was truly a woful state. But as spiritual evils are generally but little felt, especially when carnal views and desires, become most prevalent in the mind; judgments that affect outward enjoyments, are frequently inflicted or suffered to take place, that fear may be awakened, which may excite that enquiry which leads to repentance. And as physical evil, is the native offspring of moral evil; so woes of a different kind, sprang out of the darkness of the apostacy.

The agents by whom these woes were inflicted, are represented by the following similitudes, Ver. 3. *And there came out of the smoke, locusts upon the earth, and unto them was given power as the scorpions of the earth have power.*

Locusts are sometimes compared to a great army, as Joel 2. 7, 8. and a great army is compared to locusts or grasshoppers, as Judges. 6. 5,—12.

And here they may signify the armies of the Saracens, which might be said to come out of the smoke, as they arose to support a doctrine, which had its rise from the corruption and ignorance, occasioned by the popish apostacy,

Their having power as the scorpions, may signify that as a scorpion stings, but does not devour with its mouth; so they would invade, but not destroy the governments of christian kingdoms.

Their not hurting *the grass, neither any green thing neither any tree ; but only those men who have not the seal of God on their foreheads ;* may indicate that as their wars were chiefly for the propagation of the Mahometan religion, their aim was not to hurt individuals so much in their civil property, as to establish their principles among them, in opposition to the establishment of a corrupted christianity that had taken place. Or, that their opposition was not directed so much against the most serious christians, whose principles agreed best with the word of God ; as against those who were the leaders and supporters of the apostacy, against whom they contended with arguments as well as arms. An anotator on ver. 8. says, ‘ But these words (as appears from the text I have quoted) evidently refer—to the ‘ *specious pretences* by which they advanced their ‘ religion, and the *sagacity* and *strength of reason*, ‘ for which they are *peculiarly noted* to have *valued themselves*.—Furthermore, *Mahomet*,—with a ‘ good *natural wit*, a *sweet voice*, and a *courteous disposition*, to men of all conditions, especially ‘ to the christians whom he pretended mightily ‘ to favour, and forebade to be forced from their ‘ religion ;——But above all the *great zeal* which ‘ he shewed against images and idolatry.’ They were permitted to prevail, the same author observes, ‘ by the just judgment of God, as a *punishment* upon the christians for their great superstitition and idolatry ; and that the *belief* of the ‘ *Unity of the Godhead* and of his *abhorrence of images* might be kept up in the parts of the christian ‘ world, where the *apostacy* had so mightily increased.’

Those who had the seal of God ; having their

treasure in heaven, and their *life* being hid with Christ in God; could not be hurt in *these*, by the invasions of the Saracens; but those who had not this seal, having their portion in this life; would feel themselves exceedingly hurt by these calamities. It being given or permitted them, *that they should not kill* the men which had not the seal of God on their foreheads, but *that they should be tormented five months*. May signify that they were not to overturn the governments of the popish kingdoms, which is a political death; but that they were to torment them for a season or seasons, analagous to the seasons in which locusts and scorpions are said to be most active to hurt plants and animals.

The five months are supposed to agree to the Saracens, in sundry respects.

First as it is in the summer months that locusts destroy the productions of the earth, so it was in these months that the Sarecens made their invasions.

Second, it is supposed to signify the time which the Saracens continued to torment or disturb the peace of the christian nations; in allusion to the time that locusts are said to *live* or continue *active*, which it is said, naturalists have observed to be five months. And as five months are twice mentioned, namely in the 5th. & 10th. verses, twice five months allowing 30 days to each month, will make 300 days which in prophecy generally signify so many years.

It is said that after the death of Mahomet 632 his successors made swift and prodigious conquests, overrunning Persia, Syria, Egypt, and Palaistine in a very few years, so that about 729 they had extended their arms into india, beyond

the bounds of the Roman empire ; about 643 they invaded Afric, and from thence they fell into Spain about 711, which they conquered in two years ; and about 716 overran several parts of France, till about 738, when they were totally vanquished and beaten out of those parts by Charles Martel ; but as their empire is said to have increased till 746. They might therefore continue to harass the christians sometime longer in the east & south, so as to make 150 years from the first invasions they made on the christians in those parts.

Again about the year 830 they infested Italy, and pillaged Rome itself ; and continued to torment them in these parts, till they were beaten out of them by *Otho* about 980, who was called the death of the Saracens.

This made another period of 150 years, agreeing with the 5 months. After this their empire is said to have declined, till an end was put to it, by that of the Turks, about the year 1057. see Mr. Brightman on the place.

Their torment being the torment of a scorpion when he striketh a man ; may signify, that as a scorpion torments by peircing the natural body, so the saracens tormented by penetrating the political body.

Men seeking death, and death fleeing from them ; may signify that it would have been more desirable, to the nations they harassed, to have been made provinces of their Empire, and thereby enjoyed peace ; than to be continually tormented with their invasions.

Their being like horses prepared to battle, and having crowns of gold on their heads ; may signify their warlike appearance, and successful

victories. And their faces like men, may signify, the rational manner in which they argued against the corrupt tenets and practices of the apostate christian churches, then established by the papal and civil supremacy.

Their hair being like the hair of women, may signify their insinuating address, And their teeth being as the teeth of lions, may signify, that notwithstanding all their pretences, they had still the bestial form and property

Their having a king over them, and his name being expressed in the Hebrew tongue *abadon* & in the Greek tongue *apollyon*, Is very characteristic of Mahomet their first leader, and several Caliphs who succeeded him; for as these names, signify the same in both languages, i. e. a destroyer; so both Palastine and Greece, the ancient residence of the Hebrews and Greeks, were finally overcome by their destructive doctrine and wars.

This fifth trumpet, appears therefore to have sounded loudly about the year 757 when the supremacy of the pope became dreadful to kings, and the power of the Saracens alarmed the nations; but I now think it might begin to sound about 714, or sooner, as the darkness of popery had, before that time become very gross, and the armies of the Saracens were then become very numerous, and formidable.

THE SIXTH TRUMPET. Rev. ix. 13, 14.

And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar, which is before God, saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates

The voice from the four horns of the golden altar may signify, the voice of divine power, manifested in the universal administration of Christ; the altar being an emblem of Christ, and the four horns an emblem of universal power.

And this voice commanding the four angels to be loosed, who were bound *in*, or rather *by*, the great river Euphrates, may signify the withdrawing that restraint which had confined the dominion of the Turks to the north and east of that river.

Their being called four angels agrees with what is said of the state of their kingdom before they passed the Euphrates, and the manner in which they were commanded afterwards. For in an embassy from the Scythian Turks to *Justin Junior* about the year 570. the turkish ambassadors being asked the state of their kingdom, they said, that the chief power was indeed solely in their king, but that their kingdom was divided into four principalities; and at their most memorable passing the river Euphrates, they were under the command of four captains.

Their being prepared, or preparing for *an hour*, or *a season*, as the word is sometimes rendered, *even a day a month and a year to destroy the the third part of men*, may signify the time or season between their extending their power beyond the Euphrates, & their taking Constantinople, which put an end to the Græcian empire, called the third kingdom in Daniel, and which was also one of the three divisions of the Roman Empire, so that it might be called the third on either, or both of these accounts. And a day, a month, and a year, reckoning each day a year, make 395

or 396 years, which agrees with the time between 1057 when they put an end to the Saracen empire, which had confined their dominion beyond the Euphrates; and their taking Constantinople in the year 1453, which put an end to the Greek empire, the political death of which may be called the killing of the third part of men, as the Greek empire may be called this third as has been observed.

It may here be observed further, that the judgments which came upon the empire under the seals, are said to affect the fourth part of the earth, the imperial seat being then in Rome, the capital of the fourth kingdom in Daniels prophecy; but under the trumpets a third part is generally mentioned, which seems much to favour the sense that has been given of these expressions.

What is further said of the army of horsemen, and the fire, smoke, and brimstone, that issued from them, seems to be very descriptive of the numerous cavalry in the Turkish armies, their polished armour, and the discharge of fire arms, which are said to have been first used by them.

The discharge of fire arms on horse-back having the appearance of fire and smoke and brimstone issuing from the mouths of the horses, is fitly represented by that similitude; and the great guns drawn by their horses, may be signify'd by the heads at their tails, with which they did hurt.

This trumpet might therefore begin to sound about the year 1057 when the Turks took Bagdad the capital of the Saracen empire. After which making themselves masters of Palestine, they laid the christian pilgrims under such heavy

contributions, and treated them in other respects so harshly, as to give rise to the croisades*.

THE SEVENTH TRUMPET, REV. xi. 15, 16.

And the seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven, saying the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign through the ages of the ages.

And the four and twenty elders, who sat before God on their thrones, fell upon their faces and worshipped God.

It may be more difficult to know the time of the founding of this, than the foregoing trumpets; as the events signified by what the apostle heard and saw at the founding of this trumpet, seem not as yet to have appeared.

The great voices that were heard at the founding of this trumpet, saying, *the kingdoms of this world, are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ*; seem to indicate, that it will not sound till at least six of the vials be poured out, as it does not appear that all the kingdoms of this world will submit to the government of God till the events signified by these are accomplished.

And as the seventh day was appointed for a sabbath of rest, so it is very native to think the seventh trumpet should begin with a sabbath of rest, from the oppression of kings, and the noise of war, which have so long disturbed the world.

These considerations might induce us to suppose, that the seventh trumpet will not sound, till the commencement of the Milenium; were it not for some others, that seem more certainly to determine its sounding to begin before the

pouring out of the first vial. Such as, First, the voice of this trumpet contains woes to the inhabitants of the earth as well as the two foregoing; which seems clearly to determine its sounding to begin before the vials are poured out, by which the wrath of God is finished, against those who live under, & support earthly constitutions. The woe of this trumpet will surely be past, as to the inhabitants of the earth; when the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea; and when righteousness and praise shall spring forth before all people, as Isa. ix. 11. & lxi. 11.

Second, the appearance of the elders sitting on *Sporus* thrones before God, Rev. xi. 16. seems to signify that the sounding of this trumpet, will precede, or begin with the exercise of that divine government, before which all antichristian governments will fall like dagon before the ark of God; and this appears to take place before the vials begin to be poured out. For those who pour out the vials, come out of the temple, Rev. xv. 5. and as the vials destroy all antichristian power; those who pour out the vials must be the same with the stone that smites the image and utterly destroys it, Dan. ii. 34, 35. or the saints of the most high, who shall take the kingdom and possess it; and to whom judgment shall be given. as Dan. vii. 18, 22.

Third, it is also agreeable to the order of the former similitudes, that the seven vials should be included in or follow the seventh trumpet, as the seven trumpets are included in or follow the seventh seal.

Fourth, as to the expression, *the kingdoms of this world, are become the kingdoms of our Lord,*

and of his Christ, the word *εγενετο* rendered *are become*, is expressed in an indefinite tense; and may either be rendered *are become*, *are becoming*, or *will become*, as the sense may require; and whenever this trumpet sounds, with the beginning of a divine government, among the risen witnesses, the kingdoms of this world will *begin to become* the kingdom of God, or it may be said they are *becoming* his kingdom.

Fifth, as to the seventh beginning with a sabbath of rest, this may be true in a sense; for the work of the witnesses will then be very different from what it was before. And they will rest from the bondage and oppression under which they formerly laboured.

The opening of the temple of God, is one of the events that are mentioned at the founding of this trumpet, Rev. xi. 19. and it is said again, Chap. xv, 5. the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened, before the vials were poured out; and the opening of the temple seems not unfit to signify the commencement of the work of a sabbath, which began with killing the sacrifices.

The founding of this trumpet seems therefore to begin with the right exercise of civil and religious government, constituted according to the word of God; signified by the elders sitting before God on their thrones, and the opening of the temple of God in heaven. And as the opening of the temple here, and the cleansing of the sanctuary in Daniel, appear to refer to the same thing; the line of time that is there laid down, may perhaps be our best guide as yet, (while appearances may be uncertain), to lead us to the time of the sounding of this trumpet

This line of time is in Dan. viii. 14. And is thus expressed in our translation, *Unto two thousand and three hundred days, then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.* But would be more agreeable to the Hebrew thus, *Unto the evening of the morning shall be two thousand three hundred days, when the sanctuary shall be cleansed.* What remains then is to know the time when this number began, and what space may intervene between the evening unto which this number reaches, and the morning when the sanctuary will be cleansed. From the question in the foregoing verse, this line of time appears to commence with the vision which is recorded in this chapter; for it is there said *how long, or unto what time shall be the vision.*

Now the vision which the prophet saw, was a *ram, a he goat, &c.* which the angel told him signified the kingdom of the Medes and Persians, the kingdom of the Greeks, and the kingdom of the Romans, which was to rise after the divided state of the Græcian kingdom; the kingdom of the Romans is particularly described as a king of fierce countenance, by which the holy people were to be destroyed, which has most literally and evidently agreed with the character and actions of the Roman empire. And as the destruction of the holy people, was a sorrowful vision to the prophet, and filled his heart with faintings, he is again assured of the truth of the vision of the evening and morning, which was told him, ver. 26. *The vision of the evening and morning which was told is true.*

The beginning of the 2300 prophetic days or years, seem therefore very plainly to begin with the empire of the Medes and Persians, which is generally supposed to have been about 534 or

536 years before the christian æra. Supposing
 then the _____ 2300
 to begin before the christian æra — 534
 It will reach to the year _____ 1766

And should the evening have commenced about this time, another prophetic number in Daniel may be examined, to see how far any knowledge may be obtained concerning the morning that is to succeed this evening.

It is said Dan. xii. v1. *And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.* The word *sacrifice* is a supplement both here and Dan. viii. 13. and in both places the word rendered *daily* seems to denote the continual, or constant succession of earthly powers, which was the subject matter of the vision, and this succession might be said to be taken away when an end was put to the imperial power in the Roman empire, in the
 year _____ 476

To which add the _____ 1290

It also reaches to _____ 1766

This therefore seems also to end at the evening ; and consequently the number in the next verse, Dan. xii. 12. may reach to the morning when the sanctuary will be cleansed ; for it is said Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days. If then to _____ 476

Be added _____ 1335

It will reach to _____ 1811

About which time the sanctuary may probably be cleansed, or the temple of God opened, and the seventh trumpet begin to sound, in the dawn of that blessed morning, in which upright

men shall have power over unjust oppressors : The reformation from popery has been considered by some as the morning star; and the late revolution in America, may perhaps be the dawn, of that morning. The abolishing of the honorary titles among the laity and clergy, agrees very remarkably with the fall of the *ονομματα ανδρων* *names of men*, by the earthquake that preceeds the sounding of the seventh trumpet, Rev. xi. 13. The seven thousand *names of men*, as the text, literally reads, may very fitly signify the unofficial titles of honour and nobility, that the vanity and pride of men has invented and created; together with those of reverend, *worshipful*, *holiness*, and *sacred*, that has been connected with office, from the same principal. And the length to which this principal may carry men, is particularly described Isa. xiv. from the 12. to the 15 verse.

The sounding of this seventh trumpet, will be a dreadful alarm to all who oppose the kingdom of God; and will be terrible to the kings, of the earth, and their princes, who combine against Jehovah and his Christ; for the vials of his wrath that will soon follow, will fall with pain on the heads of those who assume his titles, usurp his prerogatives, violate his law, and oppose his government.

Of the TIME of the VIALS.

As the suffering state of the witnesses appears to end with the sounding of the seventh trumpet; so prophetic time appears to end with that event also. The revelation of prophetic time, seems to be intended for the comfort of the faithful, in the times of suffering and trial.

which they fall under, as a punishment of sin, or for the trial of their faith and patience. The first time of this kind, which we have recorded in the holy scriptures, is the 400 years which the seed of Abraham were to sojourn in Canaan and Ægypt. The next is the 70 years captivity.

And as God foresaw the Jews would not improve their deliverance from the captivity, so as to recover their former freedom; and that the new Testament Church would pass through a long train of sufferings before they attained the right enjoyment of the privileges of his kingdom; so he hath revealed the time or times, during which both the old and new Testament church were to be under the power of their enemies:

As therefore prophetic time appears to end, or as no mention is made of any measure for the time between the founding of the seventh trumpet, and the beginning of the Millenium, and the events have not yet taken place, that will mark the pouring out of the vials, the time that may be taken up by them, appears to be very uncertain. But as it has been a very general opinion that the Millenium will begin with the 7000th. year of the world, or about the end of A. D. 2000, I have represented them as poured out between the founding of the 7th. trumpet and that time; tho' it is probable it may be much longer, before the events that intervene between the founding of the 7th trumpet and the Millenium be all accomplished.

There is another thing that appears doubtful with respect to the vials, and that is whether all the seven or only six will be poured out before the Millenium commence. When they are called

the seven *last plagues*, and it is said that the wrath of God *εν αυταις ετελεσθη* is *finished by them*; it seems very strongly to indicate, that no wrath will be manifested; nor plagues inflicted after they are all poured out: Consequently the last of them must remain to be poured out at the last judgment. On the other hand when it is said that no man was able to enter into the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled; it would seem, that they behove all to be poured out, before the privileges of the sanctuary be fully enjoyed; or the church enter into the full possession of the privileges of the Millennial state.

The words, however, are so express, and affirm so directly, that these are the last plagues, and that in or by them the wrath of God will be *ετελεσθη finished*; that they cannot be otherwise understood without much force or violence being done to their most natural meaning. Neither is the difficulty about none being able to enter into the temple till they be finished, much removed by supposing them all to be poured out before the Millennium; for the cleansing of the sanctuary mentioned in Daniel, and the opening of the temple which is twice mentioned in Revelation, seem plainly to imply the manifestation or enjoyment of religious privileges, before the vials are poured out. And it is also evident that the angels or agents who pour out the vials had entered, or been in the temple before they begin to pour them out; for they come out of the temple having the seven plagues, Rev. xv. 6. Since, therefore the temple is accessible by the saints before the pouring out of the vials; may we not suppose that they are excepted, when it is said

that no man, or rather οὐδεις *no one* was able to enter into the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels τελειωθωσιν *were finished*? And if so, then the declaration, that no one was able to enter into the temple till the seven plagues were finished, is a declaration, that no one who shall *then* be found in a hostile opposition to the government of God will be admitted into the enjoyment of the privileges signified by the temple, till the ends of the vials be accomplished in them; which is the staining of their glory, and the humbling of their pride. For as there was no entrance into the tabernacle of old, till the appointed sacrifices were made; so every imagination & high thought that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and every human invention or earthly constitution that opposeth his government administered by Jesus Christ, must be sacrificed or brought down by the appearance of his judgments, and manifestations of wrath, in the pouring out of the vials before there can be an entrance into the temple; though it be open to all who are humbled, and reconciled to God.

The temple of God, in which his glory will appear during the pouring out of the vials; will likely be to the church and the world, as the pillar of cloud and fire was to the Israelites and the Egyptians: Being dark and terrible to the powers of the world; but giving light and joy, to the church.

Upon the whole, I shall, therefore, without being positive, consider only six of the vials as being poured out before the commencement of the Millenium; and as the first four trumpets destroy the dominion of the last of the four beasts

that were seen by the prophet Daniel, Chap. vii. so the first four vials appear to destroy the dominion of the last of the three beasts that were seen by the apostle John, Rev, xii. and xiii.

THE FIRST VIAL. Rev. xvi. 2.

And the first angel went forth and poured out his vial upon the earth ; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore, upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image.

This vial appears chiefly to affect the dominion of the last beast mentioned Rev. xiii. 11, —18. from sundry particulars.

1. That beast rises out of the earth ; and this vial is poured upon the earth.

2. That beast causes all men to receive its mark ; and this vial causes *a noisome and grievous sore upon the men who have its mark.*

3 That beast causes an image to be made to the first, and requires all men to worship the image ; and this vial affects also the men who worship its image.

This vial being poured upon the earth may signify that the constitution of the government represented by the last beast will be affected thereby, the earth being a fit emblem of a constitution.

Its affecting the earth may also signify a diminution of worldly interest and earthly granduer, which earth may also signify ; and a diminution of these will be very noisome and grievous to those who have devoted themselves to the support of the government, and enjoyed great emoluments from its prosperity.

The SECOND VIAL. Rev. xvi. 3.

And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea ; and it became as the blood of a dead man, and every living soul died in the sea.

These similitudes may signify the general stagnation that will take place among the people, and the extinction of all the several offices that were exercised among them, for supporting the earthly power that has long oppressed mankind.

The THIRD VIAL. Rev. xvi. 4.

And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters and they became blood.

This may signify the stagnation that will also take place among the rulers, who conduct the administrations which spring from human constitutions ; and the overthrow they will receive, when they resist the authority of God, or that administration which flows from that constitution of government revealed in his word.

And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous O Lord who art, and wast, and shalt be ; because thou hast judged thus : For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink ; for they are worthy. ver. 5, 6.

An angel literally signifies a messenger, and waters are used in this prophecy to signify peoples ; the angel of the waters may therefore signify the message, agency, or address of the people, acknowledging the righteous judgments of God.

Judgment being returned unto righteousness all the right hearted will follow after it ; and the people it would seem, will as it were in a joint address, acknowledge their own guilt, and the righteousness of God's judgments. And the other out of the altar that says, ver. 7. *Even so,*

Lord God almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments. May intimate that the acknowledgment of the people will be attended with another from the saints, who may then receive them into their communion, expressing also an approbation of the righteous judgments of God, manifested in the pouring out of the foregoing vials.

The FOURTH VIAL. Rev. xvi, 8.

And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun ; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire.

As the founding of the fourth trumpet darkened the sun in the system of the Roman government, so this fourth vial is poured upon the sun in the system of this government. From which it would seem that what is analogous in this to the Roman senate, will be dissolved or changed by this vial. Men being scorched with great heat, as Ver. 9. may signify the fervent zeal with which truth and the character of God will be asserted, and the pain it will give to earthly minded men, who harden themselves in wickedness and blaspheme the name or character of God, when they should submit to his gracious government.

The FIFTH VIAL. Rev. xvi. 10,

And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast ; and his kingdom was full of darkness, and they gnawed their tongues for pain.

The word rendered *seat*, is *θρονος* a throne, a seat of government or authority ; and this vial being poured thereon, upon which it becomes full of darkness ; may signify that the foundation of all earthly authority and government, will be so

shaken by this vial, that the whole system will be deranged and thrown into confusion. And the beast that rose out of the earth having gone into perdition by the foregoing vials, as Rev. 17. 11. this will fall on that which rose out of the sea, which had been most universally admired; but must also come to an end under this vial. Yet notwithstanding the increasing light of the gospel, and the manifestation of the gracious government of Christ, the king of righteousness and peace; some it seems, will still continue obstinate, in saying we will not have this man to reign over us, and instead of repenting, will blaspheme God because of their pains and their sores, as Rev. xvi 11.

THE SIXTH VIAL. Rev. xvi. 12.

And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates, and the waters thereof were dried up that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.

Euphrates is the name of a great river in the east, among the streams of which ancient Babylon was built; and it was the eastern boundry of the dominion of the old Testament church. The name of this river in the Hebrew tongue is expressed by פרת a word that appears to be derived from פרה which signifies to *break* or to *squeeze*. It may therefore fitly signify a despotic administration which breaks the restraint of God's law, and squeezes the people by oppression. And the drying up of the water, may signify the people's ceasing to support that administration, upon which the despotic governments which have long subsisted in the east must fall. The way of the kings of the east being thereby pre-

pared may indicate, that the fall of these governments, particularly the turkish empire, will make way for the Jews and Israelites, the ancient kingdom of God, to return to their former inheritance; or that the diminishing of these will make way for the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, being possessed by the people of the saints: Who may be called kings, as they shall reign with Christ; and kings of the east, as they are the morning dawn, or first fruits unto God and the Lamb, in the millennial kingdom.

But as under the foregoing vials, some instead of being humbled so as to give glory to God, will blaspheme his name, so under this, when antichristian power is dissolving under all its forms, it seems, instead of yielding to the government of God, there will be a general confederacy to oppose it. For it is said, ver. 13, 14. *I saw three unclean spirits, like frogs, come out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet; for they are the spirits of devils working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them unto the battle of the great day of God Almighty.* The design and issue of this confederacy or gathering, is more fully represented Rev. xix. 19, 20. *And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army; and the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image; These both were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.*

These being thus taken and destroyed, and their attendants slain, as Rev. xix. 21. and the dragon being bound as Chap. xx. 2. Righteousness and praise will then spring forth before all people, and Jehovah will be king over all the earth and his name one. Then also the prayer of the souls under the altar will be answered; and the souls of them that have been beheaded for the word of God and the testimony they held, who have not worshipped the beast nor his image; being set on thrones, and made priests and kings, shall live and reign with Christ in that blessed and happy state of his kingdom. As Rev. xx. 4.

The seventh vial is poured into the air, which may signify, that the effects of this vial will be universal, so as to affect all the dominion of *the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience*; who at the last judgment will be condemned to *the fire* prepared for him and his angels, when wicked men and devils will suffer one common punishment, in *the lake of fire and brimstone which is the second death*. The great voice out of the temple, saying *it is done*, at the pouring out of this vial. Rev. xvi. 17. is very similar to the voice pronounced by him who sits on the throne at the last judgment, Chap. xxi. 6. *And he said unto me it is done*.

The mention of *thunders, a great earthquake, the division of the great city, and great babylon coming into remembrance before God, &c.* after pouring out of this seventh vial, may be a rehearsal of events that had formerly taken place; which is not uncommon in historical narrations, and therefore

can be no way improper in prophetic revelations and therefore can be no way improper in prophetic revelations. We have an instance of this 2 Kings xi. 19, 20. *And they brought down the king from the house of the Lord, and he sat on the throne of the kings; and all the people of the land rejoiced, & the city was quiet. And they slew Athaliah with the sword, beside the kings house.* It is plain from the forgoing verse, that Athaliah was slain before Joash sat on the throne. See also Jud. vi. 24—26.

A short account may now be given of the three beasts, or modifications of the one beast, by which the government of God is opposed; and will be utterly destroyed at last, by the manifestations, of his righteous judgments.

And first of the dragon Rev. xii. 3. *There appeared another wonder in heaven, and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.*

The dragon is generally understood to signify the imperial power in the Roman Empire; and being in heaven, may signify, its having established its authority where God had eminently displayed his glory, and where he had made the light of his truth most eminently to shine, or among those persons, whom he called to be his witnesses, and set for a light to the world. It was a great wonder that a church was formed upon the doctrine of the apostles, and purged so far from earthly corruption, as she is represented ver. 1. considering the strong prejudices both of the Jews and Gentiles, and the gross corruptions into which they both had sunk. And it was also a wonder that persons enjoying the light of reason and revelation should suffer such a despo-

tic and oppressive power to subsist among them. In the war that there was between Michael and his angels; and the dragon and his angels, in the time of the seals, tho' the blood of the saints was shed like water, yet they overcame by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony; for the imperial power was at length expunged, and the senate itself, which was generally considered as the vital part of the Roman government, at last totally abolished. And since the fall of the Roman Empire, imperial government, whether heathen or Mahometan, has had no place among those who have enjoyed the greatest manifestation of divine light; which may perhaps be signified by his place being no more in heaven.

The joy in heaven, or among the faithful, that took place at the fall of the dragon, has been much darkened, and even turned into mourning by the rise of another devouring beast; so that their case has been much like those to whom it was said of old, Isa. xiv. 29. *Rejoice not thou whole Palestina, because the rod of him that smote thee is broken; for out of the serpents root shall come forth a cockatrice.* That the next beast was of the same kind, or only a different head of the same beast, or a different modification of the same power; appears from what is said of the dragon persecuting the woman, and making war with the remnant of her seed, after he is cast out.

Second, Of the beast like a leopard, Rev. xiii. 1, 2. *And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the*

*mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power, and *ἡγεμονίαν* throne, and great authority.*

As the dragon appears to represent the earthly power, that has always opposed the government of God ; so this beast like a leopard appears to represent the same power, under a different modification. That like a dragon, represents earthly power under the influence of paganism ; this like a leopard, the same power under the influence of popery. The dragon appears chiefly intended to represent the heathen power in the Roman Empire, which persecuted the primitive church ; and at the same time to give a general representation of earthly power, under all the heads and horns that have directed, or shall direct, that power against the witnesses for truth, from the days of Mizzeraim and Nimrod, till the battle of Armagiddon. And the beast like a leopard, appears chiefly intended to represent the same power as modified under popery ; and at the same time, to shew its sameness with that represented by the dragon, all the former heads though fallen and diminished, are brought into view.

Though the dragon and this beast agree in in the number of their heads and the number of their horns, they differ as to the manner of wearing the crowns ; for the dragon has the crowns upon his heads, but this beast has them upon his horns. This distinction agrees exactly with the different states of government, under paganism and popery ; for while paganism had the ascendancy in the empire the government was administered by the imperial authority, under which as a common head, the system of religion and civil policy was united ; this had been the case under all the five heads or monarchies that

had fallen before the Roman Monarchy arose to its hight ; but when the popish superstition got the ascendancy, the government was administered separately by the powers of the several kingdoms into which the empire was divided, soon after christianity became the established religion, and the popish superstition and supremacy became the head, in which religion and civil policy was united.

The field in which this beast acts may be considered as beginning with the division of the empire among the three sons of Constantine, after which the chief seat of the Empire was removed to Greece, the third kingdom in Daniels prophecy and represented by a leopard Dan. vii. 6.

This field of action may be considered as widening with the increase of the kingdoms that united in acknowledging the popes supremacy.

The dragon giving this beast his power and his seat, and great authority, was most literally the case, when the power that had been exercised by the pagan rulers was transferred to the popish, and Rome which had been the seat of the emperors, became the seat of the popes.

It is also said of this beast that one of his heads was wounded or slain to death, and his deadly wound was healed. Rev. xiii. 3. This seems to be the sixth head that was wounded to death, or the heathen power which was destroyed in the Roman Empire under the sixth seal ; but which was healed by a reviving of the same power, and the exercise thereof under the popish constitutions, as the seventh head. So that the world by wondering after this beast, and revering his power, worshipped the dragon from whom his power was derived. ver. 4.

His speaking great things and blasphemies; is characteristic of the great encroachments that have been made on the prerogatives of Christ, and the opposition that has been shewn to the word of God as the only rule of faith and and practise

His *continuing*, or rather as it is in the Greek, *making war* forty and two months, seems to be a prophetic revelation of the time that the witnesses were to suffer under this beast. Or the time that the place where this beast excercised his power would continue to be the theatre, where the contest between the witnesses for truth, and their opposers would be chiefly carried on. For as the place of the dragon was the theatre of war between the witnesses for truth, and their opposers, for about 300 years, after which it was transferred to the place of this beast; so the place of this beast was the theatre where the same war was carried on 42 months, after which it was transferred to the place of the beast that arose out of the earth.

Forty two months or rather moons, at 29 days each make 1218. and at $29\frac{1}{2}$ they make 1239.

Now if 1218 be added to 313 or to 316 when the heathen power fell, 1218 1218

It will make 1531 or 1534

The first is the very year that Henry 8th. claimed the popes supremacy, and the last is the year in which the supremacy was confirmed to him and his successors by act of parliament.

And if to 325
when the clergy and Emperor framed
articles of faith, be added 1239

It makes 1564

about which time the popes supremacy was also

rejected in Scotland ; for in the year 1560 the pope's authority was abrogated by act of parliament, which act was, also ratified and approved, by the parliament 1567.

But when the protestant kingdoms divested the pope of his usurped supremacy, they did not restore it to the rightful owner ; but vested it in the persons of their kings, which gave rise to the other beast, described Rev. xiii. 11—18

And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, or ἐξουσίαν αὐτοῦ in his presence, and causeth the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast whose deadly wound was healed.

This beast is expressly called another, in distinction from that described in the former part of the chapter ; so that those who say this & the former, are one and same, do expressly contradict the plain words of the text. Therefore as the former signifies a mode or constitution of government different from the heathen form, signified by the dragon ; so this signifies a mode or constitution different from the popish, signified by the beast like a leopard. Neither will the character of this beast agree with the mahometan power ; for that has not a milder appearance than the popish, the power of the pope is not exercised thereby, it has made no image of popery, nor does it cause popery to be worshiped ; but in the constitution and administration of protestant governments, all these may be clearly seen.

1. That the protestant governments are more mild than the popish, will generally be acknowledged by all protestants, and that the British go-

vernment in particular, is the mildest and best, papists themselves seem to confess: The similitude agrees therefore, well with the protestant governments which differ from popish, as the horns of a lamb from the teeth of a lion.

2 The power of the pope as head of the church has been excercised by protestant kings and queens ever since the reformation. This power was formally vested in the king of England in the year 1534. when it was enacted, That the king was the supreme head of the church, and the first fruits and tenths were given to him; this power he excercised before the pope, and in opposition to his bulls, when the bishops took out commissions from him, empowering them to ordain and execute the episcopal function; and the same power, has continued to be excercised by the kings of Britain, in various ways ever since.

3 The hierarchy, form of worship; and observation of holy days, established by the royal supremacy, bear a great resemblance to those of popery; (as is very fully shown in *De Laune's Plea for the Nonconformists*,) and is therefore a real image of the first beast.

4. That the beast like a leopard is worshipped as much by those who pay a sacred regard to the relicts of popery in protestant constitutions, as the dragon was worshipped by those who paid a sacred regard to the relicts of paganism, in the popish, is certainly true.

The dragon is as expressly said to be worshipped under the reign of the first beast, Rev. xiii. 4. as the first beast is said to be worshipped under the reign of this, ver. 12. Therefore as those who adhere to the popish constitutions, are said to worship the dragon, in consequence of the

pagan rites and tenets that are in these constitutions, though they profess an abhorance of paganism; so those who adhere to protestant constitutions, are said to worship the first beast, in consequence of the popish rites and tenets that are in protestant constitutions, though they profess an abhorance of popery: For as persons may profess to know God and deny him by wicked works; so they may profess to deny superstition and error and yet cleave fast to both.

There are several other circumstances that prove, or tend to prove, that the protestant constitutions that were established upon the reformation from popery, are signified by the beast that is said to rise out of the earth, having two horns like a lamb, and spake as a dragon.

1. As to the time of its rise.

It was before observed that the first beast was to have the power of making war against the witnesses 42 months, and that these at 29 years each, a day being put for a year, reach from the fall of the heathen power about 313, to 1531. about which time the popish power fell in England. And as there was an interval of above 80 years from the shock that was first given to heathenism by the victory of Constantine 313, to its fuller suppression by Theodosius 395; so there was above 80 years from the shock that was first given to popery by the preaching of Luther 1517, to the gun powder plot 1605, when further provision was made for the suppression of popery. So also, as in the first of these intervals paganism was revived for a little time in the reign of Julian, so in the last popery was revived for a little time in the reign of queen Mary.

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2 As those who held the testimony of Jesus in popish countries were protected from the persecution of the pagan powers, by the rise of the first beast; so the witnesses who have held the testimony of Jesus in protestant countries have been protected from the persecutions of papists since the rise of the second. And as the church of Rome became the head of the church which make up the body of the first; so the kingdom of England became the chief, and in some respect the head of the kingdoms which make up the second. Thus, when the protestant princes of Germany formed a league for the defence of their religion and liberties 1531, and invited the kings of England, France, Denmark, &c. to join them, they were willing to declare the king of England the head and protector of the league*.

3. As the second beast not only caused an image to be made to the first, but caused the image to be worshipped also, and that under pain of being put to death, Rev. xiii. 15. so a form of worship and church government was not only framed in consequence of the supremacy vested in the crown, but acts of uniformity were also passed, requiring all to pay a sacred regard to the established forms.

Thus when the supremacy was re-acted, the act of uniformity passed soon after, in the reign of queen Elizabeth about the year 1559, which laid a foundation for persecuting dissenters more or less ever after that time, who in 1572 forsook their parish churches and separated from the church of England. After James acceded to the crown of England 1603, a proclamation was

* Encyclop. under Reformation.

issued enforcing the act of uniformity, whereupon about 49 ministers were deprived for refusing to conform. In the reign of Charles I. 1630. Dr. Leighton, a Scotsman, had his ears cut off and his nose slit, for publishing, *An appeal to the parliament, or, a plea against prelacy*. And the great numbers that were killed for the testimony which they held against the supremacy, in the reigns of Charles II. and his successor, make a cloud of respectable witnesses; that under the appearance of a lamb-like innocence, there was a serpents tongue in the British government, commanding the most faithful in the land to be killed. Which agrees exactly with what is said of this beast having horns like a lamb and speaking like a dragon.

4. This second beast being mentioned as the last that is to rise to oppose the witnesses, it must be the same with the little horn in Daniel.

Before that little horn three horns are said to be plucked up by the roots; which agrees with the three kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland being united in one. And its looks are said to be more stout than its fellows; which agrees well with the rank which the power of these united kingdoms hold among the nations; which though little in extent, have been strong in war. The looks of the British government has long been more stout than its fellows, and it has appeared remarkably so in the two last wars it has been engaged in. In the last it could look in the face, and display a hostile banner against the combined powers of France, Spain, Holland, and those who had been its subjects in America; and though it failed in the attempt, to hold the American friends of liberty under its power, yet

it maintained the struggle, single and unassisted, to the admiration of all beholders. And the stout appearance it lately made, so as to awe its most powerful neighbours into peace, after they appeared to have gone a considerable length in hostile preparations, doth still further demonstrate its agreement in this respect, with the little horn whose looks were more stout than its fellows.

Now as the transition from paganism to popery, and from popery to protestanism, has been the effects of increasing light, which has produced more liberality and humanity among the nations; it may be expected that a further increase of divine light will make all nations, and all orders of men, see their interest in promoting the good of one another; so that oppression and violence shall cease among men, and the noise of war shall no more disturb the nations.

How far the late revolution in America, may contribute to this desirable end, time will best discover; but the establishment of a society there for political enquiries, to advance the science of government, and promote human happiness has a favourable appearance. And the Philosophic and Philanthropic Dr Franklin being president of this society at its first establishment, is no unfavourable circumstance.

The spirit that prevails in Scotland for a reformation of government in the Burghs, and in France for the rights of the people; seems strongly to indicate the approaching fall of despotism, in all its various modes.

And the publications of the society for constitutional information, may be a mean of promoting political knowledge and a spirit of enquiry; which may terminate in a discovery of that form

of government revealed in the word of God: The perfection, excellence, simplicity, and suitability of which to promote human happiness; will be found to exceed in a surprising manner and degree, what the generality of mankind have imagined.

In the mean time, the exhortation of the apostle Paul to the Romans, after describing the nature and end of that administration of government, which God hath ordained in his word; deserves the attention of all, especially of those who pray in faith, that the kingdom of God may come, and that his will may be done, in earth as it is in heaven; Rom. xiii. 11—14. *And that knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof.*

Those who submit to the government of God in their hearts, may be happy in the worst of times; and those who will not submit to him, will be miserable in the best. For he will keep them in perfect peace, whose minds are stayed upon him*; but there is no peace to the wicked†.

* Isaiah xxvi, 3.

† Isaiah xlviii, 22.

HE A R this all people far and near,
 great kings and rulers all ;
 Of earthly power and carnal pride,
 God has declar'd the fall.

The book the Lamb has opened,
 important truths unfold,
 The scenes the opening seals disclos'd
 as facts now past are told.

The trumpets sounding loud alarms
 woes after woes do bring
 On those who truth corrupted have
 and war'd 'gainst Christ the king.

The vials of wrath pour'd out at last,
 will quite destroy the power ;
 Of all his combin'd enemies
 who do the earth devour.

The monstrous beasts that risen have
 will then all disappear
 And all who peace and truth do love,
 will then live without fear.

For then Jehovah shall be king,
 o'er all the earth he'll reign * ;
 Through Jesus raised to his throne † ,
 the Lamb that had been slain.

* Zeck. xiv. 9. † 1 Pet. iii. 22,

The knowledge of his glory then,
 the earth throughout shall fill * ;
 And righteousness and peace also,
 maintain always he will †.

The earth with joy shall own his reign,
 and all the isles be glad § ;
 When righteousness and praise spring up ||,
 and wickedness is fled ‡.

O may his kingdom quickly come,
 and may his power appear ;
 That all may to his sceptre yield
 and to his voice give ear.

* Isa. xi. 9. † Psal. lxxii. 7. § Psal. xcvi. 1.
 || Isa. lxi. 11. ‡ Psal. cvii. 42

F I N I S.

A

S U P P L E M E N T

To the EXPLANATION of the

S C H E M E.

The monarchies, signified by the seven heads of the great dragon, are supposed to begin, continue, and end, as in the following table.

A. M. signifies the year of the world, B. C. before the Christian Æra; only the numbers that have * before them, are after it.

HEADS	B E G A N		Con- tinu.	E N D E D.	
	A M	B. C.		A M	B C
1. Ægypt,	1816	2188	1858	3673	331
2. Assyria.	1945	2059	1453	3398	606
3. Babylon.	3398	606	70	3468	536
4. Persia.	3468	536	205	3673	331
5. Greece.	3673	331	282	3955	49
6. Rome.	3955	49	396	4341	*337
7. Popish K.	4341	*337			